



## **Joining the call for a ceasefire and an end to the violence in the ongoing conflict in Israel and Palestine**

In the name of the Institute of the Brothers of the Christian Schools and its global Lasallian Family, Brother Armin A. Luistro, FSC and his General Council, join the many calls that have already been made by our Holy Father, Pope Francis, religious leaders, faith-based groups, humanitarian organizations and all those calling for an immediate ceasefire in the current conflict in Gaza. We unite our voices with those calling for halting the ongoing aggression to guarantee humanitarian aid and freedom for hostages.

Let it be clear that we strongly condemn terrorism and all acts of violence. This most recent conflict began with violent terrorism leading to aggressive retaliation and many innocent lives lost. In the words of Cardinal Tobin (Newark, USA), “Peace has once again been shattered in the land that is considered to be holy ground by Judaism, Christianity and Islam. God’s children are once again at war with one another, making their common hope for peace seem unattainable” (3/11/23). As Christians, let us commit ourselves to non-violent measures towards seeking peace and justice asserting *violence does not justify violence!*

The Lasallian Catholic educational mission’s commitment to “the human and Christian education of the young” makes us especially aware of the many lives of children lost. This pains us greatly. The tragedy that continues to unfold is the result of a failure to recognize that each is made in the image and likeness of God. It is to choose the cycle of violence. *Enough is enough!*

Our presence in the Holy Land also makes us especially aware of the pain inflicted on the many Palestinian people who have been treated unjustly and weaponized. We lift up the “cry of the poor,” and the many innocent lives lost across ethnic and religious backgrounds. *We urge mercy, this is not the way!*

**Today**, we find hope in the many other places where our mission is present that witness to the way of peace, harmony, and reconciliation.

**Today**, we pray for the conversion of hearts so that true efforts of peace and justice are possible.

**Today**, we stand with those who suffer and beg for the light of day to come once again.

Rome, 10 November 2023